

BCTGM *News*

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NUMBER 5

Panel says FDA lacks staff
to protect food imports

Tainted Food
is Traced to
Developing
Nations

Food labeling issue
simply can't wait

Trade deals
mean more
unsafe food

Only 1% of food
imports are inspected

Outsourcing
complicates
food recalls

**Who Is Protecting
North America's Food Chain?**



the PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Corporate Greed Threatens The Health Of Our Citizens

"The combination of an inadequately staffed food inspection system with a dramatic increase in food imports has become an issue of national security. It is imperative that Congress and the President move immediately to rectify this situation."

—AFL-CIO Executive Council Statement, August 2007

Scarcely a day goes by that we don't open the newspaper or turn on the news and see another story about unsafe or contaminated foreign-made products showing up on our store shelves—children's toys, tires, toothpaste, fish and pet food—to identify just some of the most recent problems.

This threat to the health and safety of the American people is the direct result of corporate executives' relentless pursuit of the cheapest labor they can find and their opposition to effective government regulation that might interfere with their irresponsible employment and production practices.

While products coming from China are currently the most notorious, we know that Mexico's cheap labor market has become a production haven for many employers in BCTGM industries and a cause of major job loss for our members.

At the same time, official reports from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) are showing that a growing number of shipments in chocolate, candy, cereal, cookies and snack foods are being stopped at the border because they are unsafe due to bacteria or chemical contamination.

Worse yet, we know that only one percent of all food imported into the U.S. is even being inspected by the FDA. Moreover, only a small fraction of that one percent is actually tested in FDA labs for bacterial and chemical contaminants.

In the past five years under the policies of the Bush Administration, the number of FDA and Department of Agriculture food inspectors has dramatically declined while food imports into the U.S. have doubled.

Because of loopholes and shortcomings in the laws governing the importation of food products, American consumers can never be certain where the products they purchase were actually produced. For this reason, the BCTGM is taking the lead in championing legislation that mandates uniform, comprehensive country-of-origin labeling (COOL) for all food products and ingredients imported into the United States.

Enactment of this legislation will enable American consumers to determine very easily whether the cookies, cereal, snack food, candy, chocolate products and pet food they purchase were made in the United States or Canada as opposed to some low-wage, third world country that has fewer—if any—meaningful health, sanitation or labor standards. And, country-of-origin labeling will add greater importance to the "Made in America" label.

Effective legislation in this area will mandate a significant increase in the number of FDA inspectors and the number of thorough food inspections they would carry out. It also would require that FDA inspectors be present at

EVERY U.S. port of entry—rather than one out of every four ports as it stands now.

The BCTGM is working closely with the AFL-CIO on additional food and product safety legislation. As more and more employers move production out of the United States to Mexico and other low-wage countries, passage of this legislation takes on greater importance for BCTGM members and their families.

In their reckless pursuit of greater profits, the captains of industry are sacrificing the good jobs of our nation's workers and the health of our citizens. This irresponsible corporate mentality is not a new experience in America. In the past, whenever corporate greed has gotten out of control and threatened the well being of our nation, government has stepped in to protect its citizens. It is time for the government to do so again. However, since the current Administration is controlled by corporate greed, citizens shouldn't expect meaningful action as long as they're in office.

This provides another powerful reason for BCTGM members to get involved in the political process and help elect a President of the United States and members of Congress who will put the brakes on corporate greed and stand up for the safety of our citizens and this great nation.

Frank Hurt

BCTGM International President



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UNION SPORTSMEN'S ALLIANCE (USA) A Hunting and Fishing Club for Union Members

More than 3.2 million members of AFL-CIO affiliated unions hunt, fish and enjoy the outdoors. Isn't it time you have your own club? The BCTGM and the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership (TRCP) think so. That's why we've joined forces to bring you the Union Sportsmen's Alliance (USA), a one-of-a-kind hunting and fishing club for union members, retirees and their families.

Enjoy a Membership Loaded with Benefits

When you join the USA for an annual fee of \$25, you receive a \$25 gift certificate on Beretta field gear and a subscription to a top outdoor magazine. Plus, you'll be entered to win thousands of dollars worth of hunting and fishing gear and trips. Tack on a personalized member card, auto and hard hat decals, a bundle of savings with deals and discounts on outdoor equipment, a member's website to share ideas and discover new places to hunt and fish—it is quite a bang for your buck! For \$15 more, you'll receive an attractive USA hat and the "Big Bass-Big Bucks" DVD.



Connect with Fellow Union Sportsmen

Through the forum section of the USA website, union sportsmen and women can connect with their union brothers and sisters throughout North America who share a common passion for the great outdoors. Thinking of buying the latest hunting or fishing gadget? Ask other hunting and fishing enthusiasts before you make a purchase. Trying to plan a hunting or fishing trip? Ask your fellow USA members about guides and outfitters they've used and avoid wasting money and vacation time. Got a photo of an impressive trophy or a tried-and-true tip to share? Union members everywhere now have a home on the internet at www.UnionSportsmen.org!



To Join the USA

- Call toll-free: 877-USA-2211, or
- Log-on to www.UnionSportsmen.org

The USA is a program of the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership, a coalition of hunting, fishing and conservation organizations working together to guarantee Americans quality places to hunt and fish. The USA will strengthen the TRCP's efforts by uniting thousands of union sportsmen and giving them a voice to support the future of America's hunting and fishing heritage.

Healthcare to be a

Top Priority FOR LABOR IN '08

89.6 Million

people were uninsured during 2006-2007 – that's 1 out of every 3 non-elderly Americans

34.7%

89.6 million
Uninsured
34.7%

72.5 million
Uninsured
29.6%

1999-2000

2006-2007

From the report, *Wrong Direction: One Out of Three Americans Are Uninsured*, Families USA, September 2007.

Speaking before a large crowd in Philadelphia on Labor Day, AFL-CIO President John Sweeney discussed the need to make health care a national priority in the 2008 presidential race. "Nobody should have to fear the consequences of getting sick," said Sweeney.

And yet, in 2006, 47 million Americans went without any type of health insurance for the entire calendar year. And, according to a new report by the non-profit Families USA, approximately 89.6 million Americans—more than one out of three people under 65 years of age—were uninsured at some point during 2006-2007.

The facts speak for themselves. Health care costs are rising at more than twice the rate

of inflation. According to Kaiser Family Foundation surveys, health care premiums have increased 78 percent since 2001, far outstripping wage increases. In addition, the number of Americans with employer-based coverage fell 4.5 percent in the last five years. The result is that employers are shifting the rising costs onto their employees, a burden many workers cannot sustain.

According to BCTGM International President Frank Hurt, the health coverage crisis must be dealt with immediately. "Rising health care costs occupy center-stage in every one of our negotiations. Workers in virtually every union and every industry are being affected by this," said Hurt.

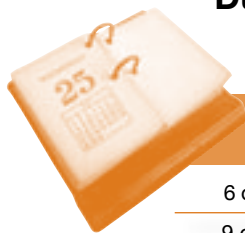
To make certain that health care remains a major issue in the upcoming presidential election, the AFL-CIO has launched an ambitious campaign that aims to

activate a one-million member health care mobilization team that will work with a broad array of grassroots organizations. The goal, according to Sweeney, is to ensure that presidential candidates "turn their campaign promises into reality."

The AFL-CIO's health care campaign focuses on reforms that would create a uniquely American system of health care that would give government, employers and individuals a role to play. The goal for any reform is to ensure that all Americans have some form of quality health coverage; that controls are put in place to curb rising costs; to provide every family the opportunity for preventative care; and to bring fairness and efficiency into the system.

Organized labor has been fighting for health care for the better part of a century. After World War II, the labor movement

Duration without Health Insurance for Uninsured People in 2006-2007



Months Uninsured	Number Uninsured	As Percent of All Uninsured
6 or More Months	57,178,000	63.9%
9 or More Months	44,926,000	50.2%

From the report, *Wrong Direction: One Out of Three Americans Are Uninsured*, Families USA, September 2007.

supported and fought for universal health care coverage. With the advent of the employer-based health care system, unions have fought for, and won improvements in their health benefits, which in turn helped raise the living standards of all Americans. “The time is ripe to take another meaningful step forward and correct the problems that are currently plaguing our health care system,” said Hurt.

Americans Want Meaningful Reform

- 90 percent of respondents to a CBS/*New York Times* poll of the general public earlier this year said the U.S. health care system needs to undergo fundamental change (54 percent) or be rebuilt completely (36 percent).
- 95 percent of the public believes the fact that many Americans do not have health insurance is a very serious (70 percent) or somewhat serious (25 percent) problem, according to that same poll.
- 76 percent of Americans either strongly support (53 percent) or somewhat support (23 percent) providing guaranteed health care coverage for every American, according to a recent Gallup poll.
- 82 percent of union members say the health care situation is either in a “state of crisis” (32 percent) or has “major problems” (50 percent).

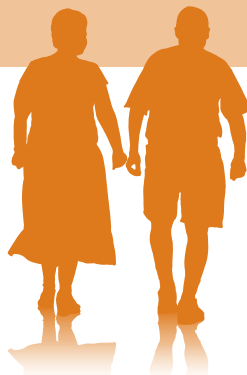
New Report Paints a Bleak Picture

A new report by Families USA, a national nonprofit, non-partisan organization, paints a gloomy picture of the uninsured in America. The report, “Wrong Direction: One Out of Three Americans Are Uninsured” found that an astonishing 90 million people were without health insurance at some point during 2006-2007. The report differs from the Census Bureau’s report which only counts those individuals that were without health insurance for an *entire* calendar year (47 million in 2006). However, there are many people who go uninsured for portions of a year, whether that is two weeks or ten months. For example, 26.4 million Americans were without insurance between three to five months; these individuals would not appear in the Census Bureau report.

Key findings include:

- 89.6 million people under the age of 65 went without health insurance for some period of time between 2006-2007 compared to 72.5 million people between 1999-2000.
- Four out of five individuals (79.3%) of those who went without insurance during 2006-2007, were from working families.
- Of the 89.6 million uninsured individuals, more than half (50.2%) were uninsured for nine months or more.
- The five states with the largest number of uninsured people during 2006-2007 were California (12.9 million), Texas (9.3 million), Florida (6.0 million), New York (5.5 million) and Illinois (3.1 million).

According to Ron Pollack, Executive Director of Families USA, “The huge number of people without health coverage over the past two years helps to explain why health care has become the top domestic issue in the 2008 Presidential campaign.”



79.3%
of uninsured people were in working families during 2006-2007

Family Employment Status	Number Uninsured	As Percent of All Uninsured
Employed Full-Time or Part-Time	71,051,000	79.3%
Employed Full-Time	63,229,000	70.6%

From the report, *Wrong Direction: One Out of Three Americans Are Uninsured*, Families USA, September 2007.

Democrats Push Pro-Worker Legislation

PAI—There has been a raft of pro-worker legislation the new Democratic-run House has approved, despite the stalling tactics and antagonism of the Republicans, after their 12 years of anti-worker rules on Capitol Hill.

But whether the pro-worker measures ultimately become law is doubtful. That's because such legislation could meet the same fate as the Employee Free Choice Act: Talked to death in the Senate by the Republicans. In the Senate, 60 votes are needed to end a filibuster. The Republicans have been able to garner enough senators to keep such filibusters going on key issues. Democrats control the Senate by a 51-49 margin.

And even if pro-worker legislation makes it through the Republican Senate blockade, President George W. Bush looms with his veto pen.

Pro-worker legislation that has been introduced includes:

- **The Employee Free Choice Act.** The bill, designed to help level the playing field between workers and employers in organizing campaigns, passed the House 241-185 in March. A Senate filibuster threat killed it in late June. The EFCA had a 51-48 margin on a motion to end debate and the filibuster, but backers needed 60 votes.
- **“Popcorn lung.”** In a bipartisan vote, the House Labor panel ordered the Occupational Safety and Health Administration to write rules cutting worker exposure to diacetyl, a chemical used

in artificial food flavoring in popcorn plants, cookie plants and elsewhere. Diacetyl produces “an irreversible lung disease that has sickened and killed workers” in California, Missouri, Ohio and other states, it said.

“Seven years after the first cases of popcorn lung were identified, it is stunning OSHA failed to issue a standard protecting workers from exposure to diacetyl,” committee chairman George Miller (D-Calif.) added.

- **Fast track.** In a win for workers, and a deviation from the usual pattern, President Bush’s authority to bargain trade pacts without worker rights and without any way for Congress to change them—called “fast track”—ended June 30. Congressional Democrats said they would not renew it. But the Administration got four trade pacts in “under the wire,” with South Korea, Colombia, Panama and Peru, and workers had to campaign against them, under the old “fast track” voting rules.
- **Family leave.** While the Bush Administration regime tried, unsuccessfully, to weaken rules for the present Family and Medical

Leave law, unions and other advocates pushed to expand it. The current law mandates 12 weeks of unpaid leave with a worker’s right to return to his or her job afterwards. Sens. Chris Dodd (D-Conn.)—family leave’s original crafter—and Ted Stevens (R-Alaska) introduced a bill mandating six weeks of paid family leave.

- **Collective bargaining rights.** The House Transportation Committee voted across party lines to order the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) to go back to the bargaining table and reach a new contract for the nation’s air traffic controllers, rather than impose a pact—as it did—with a five-year wage freeze and other cuts.
- **Pay discrimination by sex.** The House Education and Labor Committee, by a 25-20 party-line vote, approved a bill overturning a June Supreme Court ruling that threw out most sexual, racial and other pay discrimination suits. The court, 5-4, said the only way victims could sue is if they did so within the first 180 or 300 days of when discrimination started. The bill says they can sue after finding out about the discrimination, regardless of when it began.
- **Mine safety.** After hearing from survivors and experts, the House Education and Labor Committee decided mine safety needed even tougher legislation, on top of laws the Mine Workers pushed through the then Republican-run Congress following 2006’s mine disasters. So the panel wrote, and passed, additional legislation in June.



A CONGRESS FOR WORKING FAMILIES

By Congresswoman Linda Sánchez, California's 39th District



The plight of the American worker has always been my cause. Now, with a new Democratic majority in Congress, I feel fortunate that I am in a position to help make a difference and improve the lives of working families.

When I came to U.S. House of Representatives in 2003, I was asked to sign up for congressional caucuses. I joined the Congressional Human Rights Caucus and the Women's Caucus, among others.

I wanted to do something to ensure the voices of working families are loudly heard in Congress. That is why I joined forces with two other members of Congress who, like me, came from the labor movement: Reps. Stephen F. Lynch (D-Mass.) and Michael Michaud (D-Maine). Together, we formed the "Congressional Labor and Working Families Caucus" because we share a passion for protecting working families. The aim of the Working Families Caucus has been to protect workers' rights and American families by developing and implementing a pro-labor agenda in Congress.

For four years—under the disastrous leadership of congressional Republicans—we in the Working Families Caucus had to spend a lot more time playing defense than offense. It was our job to give a voice to those who suffered under the anti-worker series of bad trade deals, the inaction of OSHA, stagnation of the minimum wage, and Republican attempts to undermine the right of workers to organize and act collectively.

This Congress, I joined my colleagues to start the House Trade Working Group. With leaders like Sen. Sherrod Brown (D-Ohio) and Rep. Michaud, as well as freshmen like Reps. Phil Hare (D-Ill.) and Betty Sutton (D-Ohio), we are taking ad-

vantage of our new platform to stop the runaway train that is the Bush Administration's economic and trade policy.

Already, we helped pass the first increase in the federal minimum wage in a decade, letting hard-working families catch up to the skyrocketing costs of life. In July, the House passed the Paul Wellstone Mental Health and Addiction Equity Act, a bill that languished for more than 10 years under the Republican-dominated Congress. This legislation will require health plans to offer

Already, [the Congressional Labor and Working Families Caucus] helped pass the first increase in the federal minimum wage in a decade, letting hardworking families catch up to the skyrocketing costs of life.

mental health and substance abuse benefits on the same basis as medical benefits.

We are busy trying to fight back the Bush Administration and its "free trade" allies in Congress from pushing the next generation of trade deals based on the catastrophic NAFTA model. NAFTA and its clones have gutted the American manufacturing sector and left working-class communities to die on the vine. Yet despite this record of failure, the free traders are pushing similar deals with Peru, Panama, Korea, and Colombia.

Congressional Democrats are moving forward on a problem ignored for too long: Corporate bosses short-changing the health and pension benefits of the long-time employees who built their companies. We are working on pension legislation to ensure that those who oversee your pension funds are really looking out

for your best interests and not looking to line their own pockets.

On the health care front, we are looking at ways to help the 47 million Americans without health care, and how to support state governments that want to do the right thing by giving people more access to health care.

I am tired of Republican proposals to fix our health care system that are nothing more than lousy tax credits that really only help the wealthiest few. Most of those proposals were so bad, they couldn't even pass in the past Republican-controlled Congress.

Finally, we are able to shine a spotlight on the Bush Administration's utter contempt for worker safety. Sixteen workers are killed on the job every day in America. Every day. And these are not just workers in notoriously dangerous professions, but workers in every profession you can think of, from mechanics to teachers to newspaper carriers.

Instead of addressing this crisis in worker safety, the Bush Administration continued to underfund the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA).

With the leadership of subcommittee chairman Rob Andrews (D-N.J.) and chairwoman Lynn Woolsey (D-Calif.), we are working to strengthen OSHA and MSHA and provide them with meaningful sanctions and adequate resources to do their job: to keep those who are the backbone of the American economy safe.

This Labor Day marked eight months of new leadership in Congress. While I am proud of what we have already accomplished, I celebrated Labor Day by pushing forward with the work we still have to do.

BCTGM Fights for Food Safety



During the last year, food safety has become one of the leading domestic policy issues to face North America. Imports of processed food have doubled in the last decade. Food processing plants in the U.S. and Canada are being shuttered, as production is moved to developing nations. Ingredients coming from countries with little or no regulatory oversight are found in most of our processed foods. The government agencies responsible for keeping the U.S. food supply chain safe are overwhelmed. Massive recalls, of both imported and domestic food has shattered the public's confidence. As a result, 76 million Americans are sickened each year by food borne illnesses.

Under this shadow, the BCTGM began an ambitious legislative and educational campaign that was directed by the BCTGM International President's Office, and included collaboration with the AFL-CIO and food-related non-profit organizations. According to BCTGM International President Frank Hurt, it was time to take a stand. "We could not just sit back and watch the government turn a blind eye to tainted food imports, or to shoddy manufacturing processes here at home," said Hurt.

Food Imports Rise Dramatically

According to government data, in the past 10 years there has been a significant increase in the

amount of processed food that is imported into the United States (See chart). The increase is in both processed food, as well as ingredients that are used during manufacturing in U.S. or Canadian plants.

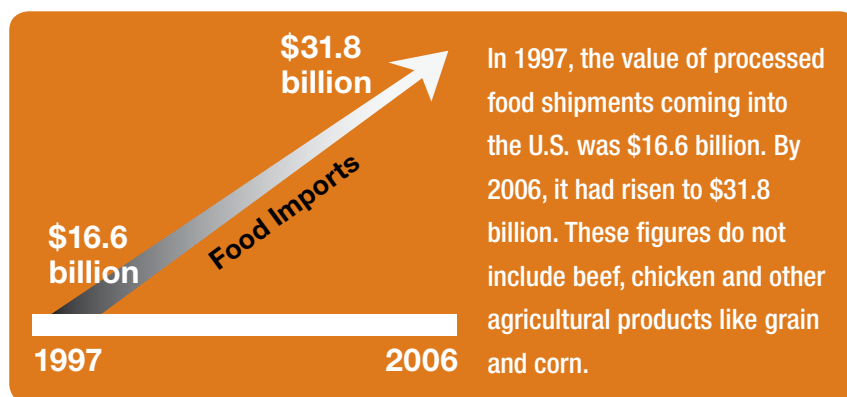
Why the dramatic rise? One troubling reason is that it has become common practice for food processing companies to close down operations in Canada or the United States, move production to developing nations, and import processed goods back into North America. For example, Hershey recently announced a massive restructuring plan that will eliminate more than 3,000 North American jobs at a half-dozen plants and move production to Mexico, where it has an existing plant. The new plant will produce for the North American market. Other food companies have done the same. Nabisco produces Fig Newtons in Mexico. Sherwood Brands makes candy canes in

Argentina. A large portion of the historic Chicago candy industry has moved out of the country.

FDA Overwhelmed

The dramatic rise in imported foods has put a tremendous strain on the agencies that are supposed to protect the food system. Currently, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) only inspects one percent of the food that comes into the U.S. In addition, the FDA is under-funded, under-staffed, and has little authority to control the flow of food into the country. In testimony before the U.S. House of Representatives, William Hubbard, former FDA Associate Commissioner, told Congress that "the FDA's import screening process was designed for an earlier era."

Highlighting the problem's at



the FDA was a study “Diminished Capacity: Can the FDA Assure the Safety and Security of the Nation’s Food Supply” presented by the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations in the House of Representatives. Among other things, the study noted that the FDA’s regulation of food imports is minimal; that the FDA’s reliance on private laboratories causes problems; that the FDA can learn from other government agencies to better screen imports; and that the current country of origin labeling is inadequate.

These problems have been exacerbated over the last seven years by the Bush Administration’s refusal to resolve the issues that have been overwhelming the FDA. In fact, instead of increasing FDA resources, the Administration has cut funding and staff, and has planned to close laboratories that are essential in the inspection process of imported goods.

AFL-CIO Issues Statement

At its Executive Council meeting in August, the AFL-CIO unanimously passed an Executive Council Statement, submitted by the BCTGM, which made it official federation policy to fight for a secure and safe food distribution system.

Noting the problems currently facing the safety of the North American food chain, the Statement calls for country of

origin labeling for all processed food, which would allow consumers to clearly know where their food was manufactured. In addition, it calls for increased FDA inspections on imported food, expanded inspections at U.S. food facilities, and the ability of the FDA to issue mandatory recalls for tainted food.

“So much of our food is coming today from developing countries, which have weak regulatory systems and that simply cannot assure the safety of food exported from producers within their borders.”

—William Hubbard, former FDA Associate Director, Testimony before the Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations

As the largest union in the food industry affiliated with the AFL-CIO, the BCTGM brought vast experience on the food industry to the table. “President Sweeney and the other leaders understand that failed trade policies, lack of regulation by the FDA, and massive recalls hurt the food industry, which in turn, hurts us,” said Hurt.

Battle Taken to the Hill

The BCTGM, in conjunction with the AFL-CIO Legislative Affairs Department, began to actively

lobby key Congressional leaders to introduce legislation that would help alleviate the problems plaguing the U.S. food system.

In the last several months, several members of Congress have put forward bills that would impact different areas of the food industry. Senator Sherrod Brown (D-Ohio) introduced the *Food and Product Responsibility Act of 2007*, with Senator Bob Casey (D-Pa.). Senator Dick Durbin (D-Ill.) introduced both *The Safe Food Act of 2007* and the *Human and Pet Food Safety Act of 2007*. U.S. Representative Frank Pallone (D-N.J.) introduced the *Consumer Food Safety Act of 2007*.

Of considerable importance to the BCTGM, was country of origin labeling for processed food. In late September, Senator Sherrod Brown introduced a bill that would make country of origin labeling mandatory for all processed foods. In a press release announcing the bill, Brown states that, “consumers have the right to know where their food comes from.”

According to President Hurt, the battle now will be to get these pieces of legislation passed. “We know that industry will spend untold amounts of money to keep these bills from becoming law. We will continue to educate, we will continue to walk the halls of Congress, and we will continue to fight for the safety of all Americans,” said Hurt.



Local 68 Holds 27th Annual Educational Conference

BCTGM Local 68 (Baltimore) continued its long tradition of educating its shop stewards by holding its annual two-day training at the Maritime Institute of Technology in September. The training, which was facilitated by BCTGM International Director of Research and Education Ray Scannell, was attended by stewards from Schmidt Baking Company, Automatic Rolls, Weston Bakeries, H&S Bakery, among other companies.

The main focus of the training was a workshop on “Good Jobs: An America that Works for All.” Based on a curriculum developed by the AFL-CIO, Scannell’s presentation reviewed the current economy and the policies and decisions by government leaders that led to the precarious state American workers now find themselves in. Scannell then went over the Agenda for Shared Prosperity, a set of proposed economic policies



L. 68 Vice Pres. Rodney Lightfoot Sr. (right) receives his 10-year service award during the educational conference from L. 68 Fin. Secy. Gary Oskoian (left).

to improve the situation for working families developed by the Economic Policy Institute (www.epi.org) and the AFL-CIO.

At the beginning of the session, stewards worked in small groups to identify the most issues facing working families in Maryland and the mid Atlantic states. After discussing what alternative government policies should be, at the day’s end participants hand

wrote letters to their Congressional Representatives, enclosing a copy of the Agenda and asking for action.

Local 68 Stewards were also addressed by Jay Smith, Assistant Director of the AFL-CIO Community Services Metropolitan Baltimore Council. Smith spoke on behalf of the United Way and urged members to become involved in the annual campaign.



GEB Elects Pegram

During the 75th Session of the BCTGM General Executive Board (GEB) in Washington D.C. on September 8, Local 317T (Greensboro, N.C.) President Tony Pegram was elected as the GEB member from Region 4, Tobacco. Pictured here, BCTGM International President Frank Hurt (left) administers the Oath of Office to Pegram (right) during the annual September meeting.

2008 BCTGM International Scholarship Program

The BCTGM International Scholarship Program will award ten \$1,000 one-time scholarship awards in 2008. One of the scholarships is reserved for a Canadian and up to three of the 10 are designated for active members of the BCTGM. The deadline for applications is January 31, 2008.

To learn more about this special BCTGM membership feature, you can find the official rules and regulations for the 2008 BCTGM International Scholarship Program and the application on the union’s website, www.bctgm.org.

Indiana Stewards Hone Union Skills

On September 8, BCTGM Local 280 (Evansville, Ind.) shop stewards attended a training program designed to strengthen and build their skills as local union representatives.

The educational seminar was conducted by International Representative Wayne Purvis. During the training, stewards focused on developing their union skills in grievance handling, arbitration, health

& safety, collective bargaining and organizing. Working collectively, the stewards brainstormed common problems in the workplace and developed strategies to take back to their shop floor following the programs conclusion.

According to Local 280 Business Agent/Secretary-Treasurer Dennis Howard, the training was well attended. "Our stewards are hard working, dedicated union

men and women. They are always eager to learn how to better represent their fellow workers," notes Howard.

"This was a great group of union members," recalls Purvis. "They especially enjoyed discussing individual workplace problems and coming up with common solutions. In all, I think they learned a lot that will help them back in the workplace."

Upon completion of the training, the Local 280 stewards pose for a photo.



Intl. Rep. Wayne Purvis (left) discusses the day's agenda with L. 280 Bus. Agt. Dennis Howard, (center) and members Danny Southwood and LaDonna Speth.

Ask a Union Officer:

What type of President would you like to see elected in the 2008 Presidential Election?



The kind of President that I would like to see elected is one that is for labor and labor related issues like the Employee Free Choice Act.

Steve Love
President, Local 117G (Shawnee, Okla.)
Union Member Since 1990



The kind of President that I want to be elected in 2008 would be one who will fight hard to preserve the rights of the American worker. I want a President who will support legislation like the Employee Free Choice Act. I want to see a President who will stand up to Corporate America to protect American workers—the people who are responsible for building this country.

Matthew Villaire
President, Local 263G (Bay City, Mich.)
Union Member Since 2001



We have reached a point in time where we are close to having history repeat itself—if we go back to the robber baron era of the 1920s and 1930s when policies were forced to change. I am looking for a President who will recognize that the only way to avoid repeating history would be to create policies that embrace the social programs that will help us turn the corner and put us on a path of economic recovery. We need to be recognized as Unions once again and solidify that we are the last line of defense for the common man. We will only be able to do this with a President who believes in the importance of labor.

Ron Mohrland
President, Local 22 (Minneapolis, Minn.)
Union Member Since 1982

LOCAL 351 SHOWCASES

BCTGM-Made Goods at State Fair

*B*BCTGM Local 351 (Albuquerque, New Mexico) joined with the New Mexico Central Labor Council on September 8 at the New Mexico State Fair to promote the importance of unions and celebrate BCTGM-made goods.

According to Local 351 President/Business Agent Earl Reed, Sara Lee Bakery donated bread and buns and Smith's Food and Drug donated cakes to be given away to fair visitors in an hourly drawing.

"The primary purpose of our participation in the State Fair was to promote BCTGM made bread products that are produced in Albuquerque," notes Reed. "But we also used the opportunity as an organizing tool and were able to collect several leads from workers interested in joining our union," Reed adds.



Local 351 Vice Pres. Justice Johansen restocks the union goods at the BCTGM booth at the New Mexico State Fair.

Local 351 Pres. Earl Reed prepares a box of goodies for the prize drawing.



Raquel Johansen (left), daughter of Local 351 Vice Pres. Justice Johansen, presents a cake to a contest winner at the New Mexico State Fair.



A fair visitor shows off her BCTGM-made bread following her winning raffle drawing.

The Origins of Labour Day in Canada

In Canada, large public demonstrations of worker solidarity occurred in the early 1870s, linked to the struggle for the nine hour workday, and the fight to overturn Canadian laws that outlawed strikes, branded unions as “criminal conspiracies” and treated strike organizers as criminals.

Large rallies and parades were organized in Ottawa and Toronto in the spring and fall of 1872 to support 24 jailed union activists—members of the Toronto Typographical Union on strike for a shorter workday. The Toronto parade drew and estimated 10,000 people.

The Ottawa parade stretched more than a mile, accompanied by an artillery band and city firemen. The marchers made their way to the home of Sir John A. MacDonald, hoisted him into a carriage and took him to Ottawa City hall, where he promised the crowd he would repeal laws outlawing trade unions. MacDonald delivered on his commitment within the year.

Demands for a shorter work week grew over the next decade, as parades, rallies and demonstrations became annual events in Canada and the United States, sponsored by a variety of unions and labour federations.

In 1882, the American labor leader Peter McGuire was invited to speak at a labour rally in Toronto, and on his return to New York organized the first American Labor Day on September 5, 1882. The “father” of Labor Day, as well as the founder of the United

Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America, McGuire was one of the most noteworthy figures in the history of the American labor movement.

As pressure for changes in work rules increased, so did conflicts with employers and the state. In 1864, the Federation of Organized Trades and Labour Unions of the U.S. and Canada established May 1, 1886 as a deadline for securing laws to shorten the workday and began mobilizing.

The International Working People’s Association planned a general strike in cities across the U.S. The Chicago event was marked by violence and in the days that followed there were demonstrations and a riot in Haymarket Square against police violence, coercion, and provocation.

Socialist workers’ movements in England and Europe were also agitating for workers’ rights, and proposing that a special day be proclaimed to underline demands for justice for the working class in industrial society. In 1889, the international socialist delegates meeting in Paris chose May 1st as Labour Day.

Demand was also increasing in the U.S. and Canada for a statutory holiday recognizing the rights and contribution of workers.

In 1888, U.S. President Grover Cleveland established Labor Day – but fearing that a May 1st date would commemorate the Haymarket Riots two years earlier and strengthen the socialist



movement in the U.S., President Cleveland chose to establish Labor Day in September –the date of the New York parades organized since 1872 by the less radical Knights of Labor. Canada followed suit in 1894, choosing early September for the national statutory holiday.

The desire by American and Canadian governments to isolate workers in North America from radical socialist movements of Europe is the reason we honor workers on the first weekend in September, while the rest of the world celebrates in solidarity on May 1st.

Editors Note: This article was published in the August 2007 issue of *The Provincial*, a publication of the B.C. Government and Service Employees’ Union (BCGEU).



Union Race Car

BCTGM Local 57 (Columbus, Ohio) member Chris Abbott is the proud driver of street stock race car #0, which is sponsored by Local 57. The car is custom painted with the BCTGM union label and Abbott races at the Shadybowl speedway every Saturday night. Abbott, who is employed at the General Mills plant in Martel, Ohio, thanks Local 57 “for helping to make my dreams come true.” Abbott is pictured here with his union-sponsored race car.



DOL Certified

BCTGM Local 70 (Grand Rapids, Mich.) member Mike Kloostra (center) receives a certificate from the Michigan State Department of Labor marking his successful completion of a multi-skill training program. The program, included in the Keebler workers’ union contract, includes many hours of training and an extensive written exam administered by the State. Kloostra was the first graduate

of the program at the Keebler plant. Pictured here is (front row, from left) L. 70 Fin. Secy. Orin Holder, Kloostra, Intl. Rep. Jim Condran. In the back row, third from left is L. 70 Pres. Bill Arends who is pictured among members of the Keebler shop committee.

Va. AFL-CIO

BCTGM Local 358 (Richmond, Va.) Pres. Ray Daniels also serves as the Vice President of the Richmond Central Labor Council. This summer, he was a delegate to the Virginia AFL-CIO Convention. Va. Senator Jim Webb (D) and Governor Tim Kaine both addressed the convention, thanking labor for helping to get them elected. Pictured here greeting Governor Kaine (right) is Daniels (left).



Since we last published a list of BCTGM Local Union mergers in the September/October 2006 issue of the BCTGM News, the following locals have merged:

Local 16G (Kansas City, MO) into Local 218 (Kansas City, MO) with an effective date of March 1, 2007.

Local 255T (Petersburg, VA) into Local 358 (Richmond, VA) with an effective date of March 26, 2007.

Local 55G (New Prague, MN) into Local 13G (Hastings, MN) with an effective date of June 1, 2007.

Local 315G (Mount Vernon, IN) into Local 280 (Evansville, IN) with an effective date of October 1, 2007.

Local 294G (Fremont, OH) into Local 19 (Cleveland, OH) with an effective date of October 1, 2007.

Union Plus Awards

Three Scholarships to BCTGM Families

*T*wo BCTGM members and one child of a BCTGM member have been selected as winners of the 2007 Union Plus Scholarship awards.

The BCTGM winners are Local 4 (St. Louis) member Lawrence Jackson, Local 263G (Bay City, Mich.) members Justin Lee, and Anthony Sperber, whose father Jerrold Sperber is a member of Local 19 (Cleveland). These three BCTGM recipients are among 103 students from 45 unions awarded a total of \$150,000 in scholarships from the Union Plus Scholarship Program. The awards are distributed to students of union families, or union members themselves, attending two-year and four-year colleges, technical or trade schools. The scholarships are sponsored by the Union Plus Education Foundation, which receives funding from HSBC, the issuer of the BCTGM Power Credit Card. Since 1992, more than \$2.4 million has been awarded through these prestigious scholarship awards.

'Good Hard-Working Man'

"I am a good hard-working man for my family," says Lawrence Jackson,

who is employed by Interstate Brands Corp. "I have set one simple goal for my life. That goal is to take the best care of my family that I possibly can."

Workplace Veteran

Justin Lee served his nation in the U.S. Marine Corps and says he now plans to advance his education. Thanks to flexibility offered by his job at Michigan Sugar Company, the Local 263G member is able to work while going to school. "My union job offers great opportunities to fit my schooling into my work schedule," notes Lee.

A Good Heart

Anthony Sperber was born with a rare heart condition that was very disruptive to his life. But that changed last year when he underwent surgery which his family could have never afforded without the health care his father, Local 19 member Jerrold Sperber, received

through his union job at Top Market Inc. "The union made health care a priority and negotiated a solid plan for every member," recalls Sperber. Today Anthony has a healthy heart and a strong mind. With his outstanding grades, he is planning to major in biochemistry or biology. "By helping fund my educational endeavors," he promises, "you are sponsoring an outspoken ally of organized labor."

2008 Applications

Applications for the 2008 awards are available on the union's website. To download the application, visit www.bctgm.org/Special/scholarship1.htm. Or, applicants may send a postcard with their name, return address, telephone number and international union name to: Union Plus Education Foundation, c/o Union Privilege, P.O. Box 34800, Washington DC 20043-4800.

The application deadline is January 31, 2008. Recipients of the Union Plus scholarships will be announced May 31, 2008.

Why Is the

HEALTH CARE SYSTEM BROKEN?

America is facing a health care crisis. Nearly 45 million U.S. residents have no health insurance, and the numbers keep growing. That's 45 million people who face bankruptcy if they get sick—or who might avoid seeking treatment altogether.

Meanwhile, a few big health care players are making big, big profits—at the expense of working families.

WHO ARE THE UNINSURED?

More than eight in 10 uninsured come from working families—nearly 70 percent from families with one or more full-time worker. More than 10 million children are uninsured today.

WHO PAYS THE COST OF THE UNINSURED?

Working families pay the price for our broken health-care system. Families with health insurance pay premiums that are \$922 higher each year to cover the health care costs of the uninsured. Taxpayers foot the bill at \$21 billion a year when workers are forced to turn to government health care programs.

AMERICA'S HEALTH CARE CRISIS HURTS WORKING FAMILIES IN THE WALLET

Medical debt is now the most common cause of bankruptcy. Workers who do have health insurance now pay 68 percent more than they did in 2000. More and more employers are choosing not to offer health insurance to their employees at all.

Working people shouldn't have to "hustle" between work, family and school, trying to avoid getting sick. Working people shouldn't get pinched in the "hustle" of hospitals and insurance companies, big pharmaceutical giants and doctors out to make a buck.

JOIN US TODAY.

Help us stop the
"Health Care Hustle."
Visit www.workingamerica.org/healthcarehustle

Sources: 1. U.S. Census Bureau; 2. Kaiser Family Foundation, January 2006; 3. Families USA, 2006